

Message Text

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15
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TAGS: PFOR, SN
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER LEE'S 1976 NATIONAL DAY MESSAGE

1. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. SUMMARY AND COMMENT. BELOW IS THE TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW'S 1976 NATIONAL DAY MESSAGE DELIVERED ON AUGUST 8. THIS YEARS SPEECH IS NOTE-WORTHLY FOR ITS EMPHASIS ON THREE THEMES: PRESENT AND FUTURE REGIONAL POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS, SINGAPORE'S NEED FOR MILITARY PREPAREDNESS, AND THE ROLE OF THE GREAT POWERS IN THE REGION. THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE BRIEFLY WAS THAT, DESPITE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, THE FUTURE STILL HOLDS UNCERTAINTIES AND DANGERS, WHICH CAN ONLY BE MET BY VIGILANCE AND HARD WORK. MOST INTERESTING, PERHAPS, WAS LEE'S COMMENT ON THE UPCOMING AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (PARA 11). THE PRIME MINISTER APPEARS TO BE REFLECTING HIS ANXIETY THAT A CHANGE IN AMERICAN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP MIGHT ALTER THE EXISTING GREAT POWER BALANCE AND THAT SINGAPORE COULD BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE RESULTING INTERACTION OF THE MAJOR POWERS. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. TEXT: PRIME MINISTER'S EVE OF NATIONAL DAY
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MESSAGE -- 1976. OUR PROSPECTS FOR 1976-77 ARE GOOD. AS THE WORLD

RECOVERS FROM RECESSION, OUR OWN ECONOMY IS PICKING UP. WE HAVE 7 PERCENT GROWTH FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 1976, COMPARED TO ZERO GROWTH FOR THE FIRST HALF OF LAST YEAR. FOR THE WHOLE OF 1976, WE CAN EXPECT 6-8 PERCENT GROWTH, COMPARED TO 4 PERCENT FOR 1975. FOREIGN INVESTMENTS ARE PICKING UP. \$155 MILLION WERE COMMITTED FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR, COMPARED TO \$85 MILLION FOR THE SECOND HALF LAST YEAR.

3. HOWEVER, THESE INVESTMENTS ARE IN SMALL AND MEDIUM PROJECTS. THE BIG PROJECTS ARE STILL HELD UP PARTLY BECAUSE OF EXCESS MANUFACTURING CAPACITY IN AMERICA, JAPAN AND WESTERN EUROPE, AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF INVESTORS' CAUTION. THEY WANT TO ASSESS THE STABILITY OF NON-COMMUNIST SOUTHEAST ASIA AFTER LAST YEAR'S COMMUNIST TAKEOVERS IN INDO-CHINA.

4. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN SOME INCREASE IN COMMUNIST INSURGENT ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND AND PENINSULAR MALAYSIA, THE SITUATION HAS REMAINED STABLE.

5. WE HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL OUR NEIGHBORS IN ASEAN. THEY ARE BASED ON GROWING CONFIDENCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER GAINED OVER MANY YEARS. THERE IS NOW A BEGINNING FOR LONG-TERM ECONOMIC COOPERATION. BUT THE PACE IS SLOW COMPARED TO WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED IN THE ASEAN AGREEMENT FOR PREFERENTIAL TRADING ARRANGEMENTS. HOWEVER, THERE IS GOOD COORDINATION IN MATTERS OF SECURITY.

6. WE HAVE MADE A START IN NORMALIZING RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM AND KAMPUCHEA. WE WANT PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

7. FOR ELEVEN YEARS, WE HAVE BROADENED OUR ECONOMIC BASE. WORKERS TODAY EARN MORE THAN THREE TIMES THEIR DOLLAR INCOMES OF 1965, MORE THAN DOUBLING THEIR PURCHASING POWER. ALL HAVE BETTER HOMES. OVER 112,000 FAMILIES OWN THEIR HDB AND JTC HOMES. EVERYONE HAS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT.

8. ALTHOUGH THINGS ARE GOING WELL, WE SHOULD ALWAYS BE PREPARED FOR THE UNEXPECTED. NATIONAL SERVICE MUST BE TAKEN MORE SERIOUSLY. TOO MANY NATIONAL SERVICEMEN, BOTH FULL-TIME AND RESERVISTS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TAKE THEIR DUTIES CASUALLY. THEY DO NOT BELIEVE THEY WILL EVER BE CALLED UPON TO PROVE THEMSELVES. HENCE THEY LACK THE DESIRE TO EXCEL, A CHARACTERISTIC SINGAPOREANS DISPLAY ON NEARLY ALL OCCASIONS.

9. REGULAR OFFICERS AND NCOS MUST INSIST ON HIGH STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE DURING TRAINING SESSIONS AND EXERCISES FOR NSF RESERVISTS. MILITARY SKILLS IN BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND GUBUP ACTION

MUST BE LEARNED UNTIL THEY BECOME ALMOST REFLEX RESPONSES. THEN THERE WILL BE NO FUMBLING EVEN IN THE HEAT OF AN EMERGENCY.

10. THE SAF IS RELAXED BECAUSE SINGAPORE IS RELAXED. IN AN EMERGENCY, MOTIVATION WILL BE HIGH. HOWEVER, UNLESS MILITARY HABITS AND SKILLS HAVE ALREADY BECOME INGRAINED, HIGH MOTIVATION THEN WILL NOT BE GOOD ENOUGH.

11. THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION IS ON THE EVE OF CHANGES. WHOEVER IS ELECTED THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT, THERE WILL BE NEW MEN IN KEY POSITIONS TO ADVISE ON POLICIES IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE. IN CHINA, SUCCESSION TO THE ORIGINAL LEADERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA IS BEING RESOLVED. THE INTERACTION BETWEEN AMERICA, THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA WILL BE DIFFERENT UNDER NEW LEADERS. WE SHALL KNOW THEN SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME BY THE END OF NEXT YEAR.

12. FOR OVER A DECADE, WE HAVE DONE WELL. WE SURMOUNTED PROBLEMS WHICH APPEARED INSURMOUNTABLE. IN EVERY CRISIS, PEOPLE RALLIED BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT AND WORKED TOGETHER TO OVERCOME OUR PROBLEMS, HOWEVER TOUGH. NOW, DIFFERENT PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES ARE ON THE HORIZON. WILL VIETNAM, KAMPUCHEA AND LAOS CONCENTRATE ON THEIR RECONSTRUCTION ? PROBABLY YES. WILL THERE BE RIVALRY BETWEEN COMMUNIST COUNTRIES FOR THE ALLEGIANCE OF UNDERGROUND COMMUNIST PARTIES IN THE COUNTRIES OF ASEAN? WE DO NOT KNOW.

13. WHATEVER THE ANSWER MAY BE, LET US GET ON WITH THE WORK IN HAND. THERE ARE JOBS THAT MUST BE DONE. AND WHETHER THEY ARE IN AIR-CONDITIONED OFFICES OR FACTORIES OR OUT IN THE SUN AND RAIN, THE WORK HAS TO BE DONE, AND DONE WELL. THAT IS OUR WAY FORWARD.

HOLDRIDGE

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